



Proposals (1002-1003) to Reject Two 1788 Thomas Walter Names of American Waterlilies (Nymphaeaceae)

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PROPOSALS TO CONSERVE OR REJECT
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Edited by Dan H. Nicolson¹

Proposals (1002-1003) to reject two 1788 Thomas Walter names of American waterlilies (*Nymphaeaceae*)

In 1788, Thomas Walter accounted for six species of American waterlilies in the genus *Nymphaea*. Two species were assigned Linnaean epithets, *N. alba* and *N. nelumbo*, and two others are now considered to be subspecies of *Nuphar luteum* (L.) Smith. However, the remaining two, *N. pentapetala* and *N. reniformis*, have been generally ignored and allowed to languish in obscurity. Several papers have been written discussing the acceptability of the former epithet (Fernald, 1934; Gleason, 1947; Sohmer, 1975; Ward, 1977) but the latter continues to be largely ignored, although mentioned by Conard (1905), Henkel & al. (1907), and Ward (1977).

The problem presented here is similar to that discussed earlier by Reveal (1990), who asked if one can "ignore a validly published name by *not* selecting a neotype?" As he stated, through neglect of certain provisions in the *Code* (Greuter & al., 1988) one can effectively have species conservation by failing to typify earlier valid names. Art. 14 and 69 of the *Code* can be invoked to reject certain names, but most do not qualify (see Reveal & al., 1990, for an example of manipulation of provisions in the *Code* to manufacture a case for rejection). However, we hope that the following long-neglected or ignored names will be formally rejected after calling attention to and neotypifying them.

(1002) Proposal to reject the name *Nymphaea pentapetala* Walter (*Nymphaeaceae*)

Nymphaea pentapetala Walter, Fl. Carol. 155. Oct 1788, *nom. rej. prop.* – NT. Here designated): U.S.A., South Carolina, Charleston Co., Mayrant Backwater, pond, Sewee Bay NW E-7, 5 Jun 1943, *Hunt & Martin 2056* (CLEMS).

Fernald (1934) proposed *Nelumbo pentapetala* (Walter) Fernald, based on *Nymphaea pentapetala* Walter, as a new combination for the American lotus, previously known as *Nelumbo lutea* (Willd.) Pers. (Syn. Pl. 2: 92. 1806). Actually, both *Nelumbo* names should have their authorship attributed to Willdenow, as he accepted them in the genus *Nelumbium* A. L. Juss., an orthographic variant according to ING (Farr & al., 1979), automatically correctable to *Nelumbo* Adanson under Art. 75.3 of the *Code*. Until Fernald's action, the acceptance of *Nelumbo lutea* had never been questioned. Fernald (1950) failed to take up his own combination some fifteen years later, largely because of what Ward (1977) termed a "sharp rebuke" from Gleason (1947). What Gleason did was declare Walter's species to be based on a monstrosity; Fernald may or may not have agreed but he accepted the conclusion and did not use the name.

Today, whether or not *Nymphaea pentapetala* was based upon a monstrosity is irrelevant, as Art. 71 of the *Code* has been deleted. Likewise, the notion that *N. pentapetala* was an ambiguous name is moot as that provision of past codes has been

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removed. Sohmer (1975) argued that the name still had to be used, and although there was no extant type specimen, the description should serve as the type as permitted by the *Code* then in effect. Now, however, that provision of Art. 9 has been deleted, leaving us with a name that cannot be typified unless neotypified.

While Fernald's association of *Nymphaea pentapetala* with *Nelumbo* has not been questioned, Ward (1977) did suggest that the original description might have encompassed more than a single element. Even if one concurs with Ward's final point that the name "is of uncertain application", the purpose of typification is to resolve that uncertainty. Unfortunately, if one accepts the relative certainty that Walter's name applies to a species of *Nelumbo*, its type must pertain to either *Nelumbo lutea* or *Nelumbo nucifera* Gaertner (Fruct. Sem. Pl. 1: 73. Dec 1788), two long-standing names over which *Nymphaea pentapetala* has priority.

Accordingly, with great trepidation, we hereby neotypify *Nymphaea pentapetala* on *Hunt & Martin 2056* (CLEMS) from Charleston County, which is adjacent to Walter's Berkeley County; the specimen is identifiable as *Nelumbo lutea*. The collection site is about 40 miles SE of the site of Walter's home (Rembert, 1980). Another collection of *Nelumbo* from southern Berkeley County (*Hunt 3158*, Goose Creek Reservoir at CLEMS), c. 35 miles due south toward Charleston from Walter's home, is probably this taxon also. According to Rembert (1980), Walter owned land and was active as a merchant and politician in the Parish of St. James, Goose Creek, in the immediate vicinity of this collection site. Ward's (1977) thesis that Walter "did not personally know the American lotus in the field" appears untenable when these collections, unknown to Ward, are considered. We agree with Sohmer (1975), despite Ward's assertions to the contrary, that the chances of the Old World *Nelumbo nucifera* being known to Walter are "infinitesimally small". Elliott (1824) did not include this taxon in his flora of the region, nor did Small (1903). Of the c. 20 collections of naturalized or cultivated *N. nucifera* represented in southeastern U.S. herbaria, none were collected prior to 1949.

With this neotypification, we are rejecting from consideration the specimen (consisting only of a single tepal) at BM that was associated with Walter by Sohmer (1975). As discussed by Ward (1977), there is no evidence that Walter ever saw or was influenced by this specimen or that it should even be associated with *Nymphaea pentapetala*. With the exception of Muenscher (1944) and Beal (1977), *Nelumbo pentapetala* has not been used in any regional or local flora or in any monograph or revision of the genus, and is currently an "explicitly" rejected name (in the sense of McNeill, 1986) as a result of the arguments put forth by Gleason (1947) and Ward (1977). *Nelumbo lutea* is a widely and persistently used name, being well established in the taxonomic and horticultural literature. Little would be gained by taking up *Nymphaea pentapetala* and, in the name of nomenclatural stability, we urge acceptance of our proposal to reject the name via Art. 69.

Technically, *Nymphaea pentapetala* could be interpreted as not qualifying for rejection under Art. 69, since it has never been "widely and persistently used for a taxon or taxa not including its type". Following publication by Walter (1788), the name appeared in Gmelin (1791) and Poiret (1798), was transferred to *Nelumbium* (an orthographic variant of *Nelumbo* Adanson) by Willdenow (1799), and to *Cyamus* Smith (a superfluous renaming of *Nelumbo*) by Pursh (1814). Both Eaton (1817), under *Nelumbium*, and Elliott (1824), under *Cyamus*, included Walter's name with comments that it rested solely "on the authority of Walter" and had not been observed since. Eaton (1818) later dropped this name from his manual. Candolle (1821, 1824)

listed it, under *Nelumbium*, among the “species non satis notae”, an opinion which had also been expressed by Poiret. Rafinesque (1830) accepted it under *Nelumbium*, stating that he had observed it in western Kentucky. Torrey & Gray (1838) and Watson (1878) reduced it to synonymy under *Nelumbium luteum*. Other authors, such as Gray (1856), Chapman (1860), and Small (1903), made no mention whatsoever of *Nymphaea pentapetala*.

The application of *Nymphaea pentapetala* has remained uncertain, and it has never been consistently treated in any manner except as a rejected name. It has never been widely or persistently used for the taxon which includes its neotype. Proposal J on Art. 69 (McNeill, 1986; Greuter & McNeill, 1987) asked that names rejected “explicitly or implicitly” under previous editions of the *Code* should not be reinstated “unless a proposal to list them as rejected names under Art. 69 has been rejected by the General Committee.” This proposal appeared to embrace, at least in spirit, past rejection under Art. 70 and 71 in addition to those under Art. 69. This reasonable suggestion became badly confused in the Nomenclature Section discussions at the Berlin Congress (Greuter & al., 1989), and an amended proposal was eventually adopted as current Art. 69.4 (Greuter & al., 1988). It is hoped that this proposal to reject will be considered in the sense expressed in the original Proposal J to deal with traditionally rejected names.

In preparing the above proposal, it has been necessary to typify *Nelumbo lutea*. As Willdenow (1799) cited no specimens, a lectotype could be chosen from any original material (specimens or illustrations) known to have been observed by him. The protologue includes references to *Nymphaea nelumbo* var. β of Linnaeus (1753, 1762) and Bartram (1793) as well as phrase names from Morison (1699), Ray (1704), and Plukenet (1696). Included in the Willdenow Herbarium (B-W) are three sheets (microfiche No. 10390) labelled “*Nelumbium americanum*”. Four additional sheets of *Nelumbium speciosum*, another species treated by Willdenow, are also present. Willdenow followed the treatment of his second species, *Nelumbium luteum*, with the Latin phrase “*Uterius ab autoptis ut sequentia examinandum*” which Rupert Barneby has translated as “To be further examined by eyewitnesses, as [are] the following ones”. The “following ones” are *Nelumbium pentapetalum* (Walter) Willd. and *Nelumbium reniforme* (Walter) Willd. The phrase implies that Willdenow had not seen any of these species himself. The absence of labelled material of the three species in his herbarium supports this interpretation. The three sheets labelled “*Nelumbium americanum*” (an unpublished name) must have been received after Willdenow’s treatment was written.

It also seems clear that no illustrations of *Nelumbium luteum* were available to Willdenow as none were cited by him and none appear in the references given. Linnaeus (1753, 1762) included all the elements cited by Willdenow except for Bartram’s (1793) account. Ray’s (1704) treatment of this taxon was derived entirely from Morison (1699) where Bobart (the actual author) provided a fairly extensive description based on material gathered by John Banister in Virginia. Vines & Druce (1914) failed to find a specimen of the species in the Morison Herbarium at Oxford, and Ewan & Ewan (1970) were unable to locate specimens elsewhere.

One of the persistent problems associated with Linnaean typifications is the significance of the specimens in the Oxford University Herbarium, and specifically those in the Morison and Sherard Herbaria. Linnaeus visited Oxford in 1736 (Clokier, 1964), and he either saw or obtained information on several of the specimens in the

herbarium there (Reveal & al., 1987). No illustrations of the American lotus were cited by Linnaeus, yet he had an understanding of the taxon. We strongly suspect Linnaeus saw a Catesby specimen (Sherardian Herbarium No. 1090, OXF) of a single leaf collected in South Carolina in 1722 and annotated by William Sherard (1658-1728) with a Plukenet (1696) polynomial also appearing in Ray (1704). This annotation was amended by Jacob J. Dillenius (1684-1747) who hosted Linnaeus at Oxford. Sherard also annotated the sheet with Morison's (1699) phrase name and Ray's reference to it, Dillenius later noting that Bobart was the actual author of this description. As noted above, the citations appearing on Sherard's label were the same ones provided by Linnaeus (1753).

Also of significance are two illustrations associated with the Mark Catesby specimen. One is a field sketch of a leaf with a note in Catesby's hand: "This seems to be Clusius his Egyptian Bean[.] The flower I could not preserve so have sent this scetch. The fruit here is call Water Chinkapin which I have not yet seen. It grows in water." The second is an unpublished Catesby drawing of a leaf (obviously based on the field sketch), a flower bud, and an open flower; there is no indication when this drawing was made. Most assuredly Linnaeus could have examined the Catesby specimen and field sketch, but it is only conjecture that he saw the final inked drawing. In *Species plantarum*, Linnaeus (1753) remarked that except for the hard seeds of the American lotus there was scarcely any distinguishing character to differentiate it from its Old World counterpart. If Linnaeus saw the Catesby drawing, this is not a surprising conclusion. Had he proposed a name for the American plant, the Catesby material could be argued as being authentic.

However, since Willdenow had no authentic material at hand when he proposed *Nelumbium luteum*, a neotype is required. Accordingly, we propose the following, in view of Willdenow's reference to Bartram:

Nelumbo lutea Willd., Sp. Pl. 2: 1259. 1799 ("*Nelumbium luteum*"). – NT. (here designated): New Jersey, *Bartram s.n.* (BM!).

(1003) Proposal to reject the name *Nymphaea reniformis* Walter (Nymphaeaceae)

Nymphaea reniformis Walter, Fl. Carol. 155. Oct 1788, *nom. rej. prop.* – NT. (here designated): U.S.A., South Carolina, Berkeley County, Santee Canal, northwest of Bonneau, 12 Jul 1939, *Godfrey & Tryon 471* (DUKE!).

Unlike *Nymphaea pentapetala*, Walter's *Nymphaea reniformis* has not been accepted in recent times. Following publication by Walter (1788), it appeared in Gmelin (1791), Poiret (1798), was transferred to *Nelumbo* (as "*Nelumbium*") by Willdenow (1799), and to *Cyamus* by Pursh (1814). Eaton (1817), under *Nelumbium*, and Elliott (1824), under *Cyamus*, also accepted this taxon "on the authority of Walter" although Eaton (1818) omitted it from later accounts. However, Candolle (1821) provided a rather lengthy description, citing a specimen gathered by John Fraser in the Carolinas. Indeed, a specimen in G-DC is labelled "*Nymphaea reniformis*? Walt. Carol. merid. Fraser" and seems to be the one described by Candolle (1821) and subsequently figured by Delessert (1824), for which Candolle provided the text. Both of these works were subsequently cited by Candolle (1824). It might be argued that Candolle executed an effective Art. 8.3 neotypification of *Nymphaea reniformis*, but as he only listed the Fraser specimen as an example and did not use the term "type" or an equivalent, this provision of the *Code* does not apply.

Later, Rafinesque (1830) questionably listed *Nelumbium reniforme*, stating that it was "probably a *Nuphar*". Torrey & Gray (1838) cited *Nymphaea reniformis* under their var. β of *Nymphaea odorata*, for which Lehmann (1853) proposed the name *Nymphaea odorata* var. *reniformis* (Walter) Lehm., a treatment accepted by Watson (1878). Walter's name was not mentioned by Gray (1856). Planchon (1853), citing Delessert's (1824) plate, and Chapman (1860) listed it in synonymy under *Nymphaea odorata*. Caspary (1867), perhaps the foremost waterlily taxonomist of all times, excluded *Nymphaea reniformis* from *Nymphaea*, stating emphatically that it was a *Nelumbium* because of Walter's inclusion of the phrase "loculis monospermis", despite its treatment by Candolle (1821, 1824). Lawson (1888), following Watson (1878), referred it, in the sense of Candolle's interpretation, to *Nymphaea tuberosa* Paine. Apart from Nash's (1895) transfer to the genus *Castalia* which was followed by Small (1903), subsequent workers accepted Caspary's conclusion. These included Conard (1905), Henkel & al. (1907), and even Nash (1907) and Small (1933), although Conard listed *Nymphaea reniformis* as a dubious synonym of *Nymphaea odorata* var. *gigantea* Tricker, a taxon Small (1933) treated as *Castalia lekophylla* Small citing *Nymphaea reniformis* of previous editions.

As Ward (1977) has noted, Walter's description is clearly based on mixed material, and without authentic material it is difficult to know exactly what elements Walter had before him when he composed the description. Walter's phrase name was "foliis reniformibus, corollis polypetalis, loculis monospermis". The leaf and corolla features could apply to a species of *Nymphaea*, while the corolla and locular characters could apply to a species of *Nelumbo*. As there is no original material, it is necessary to select a neotype. We accept the arguments of Ward that *Nymphaea mexicana* Zucc., rare in coastal South Carolina, was unknown to Walter. We reject *Nymphaea tuberosa* from consideration, as it does not grow in the region. We also reject *Nymphoides* Hill despite the similar leaves and habit because the five stamens and petals of *Nymphoides* are obviously anomalous. It was, in fact, appropriately treated elsewhere by Walter (1788: 108) as an unnamed genus under Pentandria Digynia. It seems reasonable to assume that Walter misapplied *Nymphaea alba* L. to the common waterlily of his region, i.e., *Nymphaea odorata*, a conclusion also reached by Ward (1977). Recognizing the obvious differences between the typical form of this waterlily and typical *Nymphaea odorata* var. *gigantea*, also occurring in his region, he distinguished the latter under the name *Nymphaea reniformis*. Clearly Walter erred in his interpretation of the locules as monospermous. It must be acknowledged that flowering and especially fruiting material of waterlilies is often quite difficult to collect, so one can not be certain that Walter had authentic material on which to base this interpretation.

Accordingly, we have designated the above neotype so that we might simultaneously propose rejection of *Nymphaea reniformis*. The neotype specimen was collected in Walter's home county, only a few miles from his home and doubtless within the region covered by his Flora (Rembert, 1980). It is identifiable with *Nymphaea odorata* var. *gigantea*. The Fraser collection in Candolle's herbarium (G-DC) appears to be this variety also. Since it is clear from Fraser's tentative identification that Walter did not view that specimen, since its exact locality is unknown, and since our inspection is limited to the microfiche and Delessert's plate, we preferred a modern specimen to it. Although the relationship of infraspecific entities within *N. odorata* remains to be clarified, this is the same variant with which Conard (1905) tentatively associated *N. reniformis*.

Of two specimens currently labelled as “type specimen” of *Nymphaea odorata* Aiton at BM, the one lacking collection information seems to be that referred to, and chosen as lectotype (Art. 8.3), by Conard (1905), who writes: “original specimen in hb. British Museum, from Kew Garden”. The specimen may be traceable to the original 1786 introduction of the species to Kew Gardens by William Hamilton, mentioned by Aiton (1789), although this can no longer be determined with certainty. The other specimen is a John Clayton collection (949) from Virginia and is the basis of the phrase name of Gronovius (1739) cited by Aiton. As both specimens are of typical *Nymphaea odorata*, we accept Conard’s typification:

Nymphaea odorata Aiton, Hort. Kew. 2: 227. 1789. – LT. (selected by Conard, 1905): Unattributed and undated garden specimen from the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew (BM).

The nomenclatural standing of *Nymphaea reniformis* is in many ways similar to that of *N. pentapetala*. Prior to our act of typification, *Nymphaea reniformis* has been largely ignored in recent times. Thus, one may not be able to bring the name forward for rejection under Art. 69. Nonetheless, the name *N. odorata*, which *N. reniformis* would replace, has long been widely and persistently applied to this taxon, in all taxonomic and horticultural literature dealing with this species, since it was proposed by Aiton (1789), less than a year after Walter’s flora was published. If *N. reniformis* was not now typified, it would have remained essentially a rejected name allowing *N. odorata* to remain in use as a de facto conserved specific name, thanks to nomenclatural inaction.

Art. 14.3 of the *Code* states that the “application of both conserved and rejected names is determined by nomenclatural types”. How, then, can one bring forward an obscure name for conservation or rejection without typifying it? Such a name, unless typified, would fall into the category of “implicitly” rejected names as noted by McNeill (1986). It is with this in mind that we have typified both *Nymphaea reniformis* and *N. pentapetala* so that they may be considered for rejection under Art. 69.

Recently, Wilbur (1991) has criticized the approach taken by Reveal (1990) in neotypifying *Cenchrus carolinianus* Walter while simultaneously proposing it for rejection. Although both authors seek the same end, the burial of *C. carolinianus*, they differ regarding how that end should be attained. Wilbur prefers to continue to treat such names as *incertae sedis*, a status not directly addressed by the *Code*, and Reveal chooses to propose them for formal rejection under Art. 69. For Wilbur’s approach to be successful *Nymphaea pentapetala* and *N. reniformis* must continue to be untypified, because any selection of a type disturbs current usage, both names having priority over any possible competing name. We could have taken that approach, but it would not ensure that future botanists would follow the same course. The history of *N. pentapetala*, which has already been revived twice this century, would suggest otherwise. As a matter of fact, the problem was brought to our attention by someone contemplating yet another resurrection of this name.

Once a neotype is designated, Art. 8.1 dictates that this choice *must* be followed, but can be superseded if (a) any original material is rediscovered, or (b) it can be shown to be in serious conflict with the protologue *and* another element is available which is not in conflict, or (c) it was based on a largely mechanical method of selection, or (d) it is contrary to Art. 9.2. In the case of *Cenchrus carolinianus*, it would not seem possible to ignore Reveal’s neotypification, as advocated by Wilbur (1991), without designating

an alternative type in accordance with condition (b). Furthermore, the suggestion that Reveal's "rejection proposal should be opposed" only helps *C. carolinianus* to overcome the restrictions of Art. 69.4, thus mandating its further usage.

Although we are sympathetic to the fear that nomenclature committees could become burdened with proposals involving such "traditionally rejected" names, we feel something must be done to resolve the current deficiency in the *Code*, which does not provide a permanent solution to such problems. Possible solutions would be: (1) to extend formal rejection of names to cases beyond those of current Art. 69 (which would not lessen the committees' burden); (2) to restrict lecto- or neotypifications which disrupt current usage; or (3) to provide special status to names in current usage, an approach advocated by Hawksworth & Greuter (1989).

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